



# MARIN COUNTY VEHICLE REGISTRATION FEE EXPENDITURE PLAN



# Acknowledgements

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# Introduction

## What Is a Vehicle Registration Fee (VRF) and How Does it Work?

Senate Bill 83 (Hancock) was signed into law by the Governor on October 11, 2009. The law authorizes a countywide transportation planning agency, the Transportation Authority of Marin (TAM) in Marin County, to propose an annual VRF of up to \$10 on motor vehicles registered within the County. The revenue generated by the new VRF would be returned to the County to spend on specified transportation programs and projects. SB 83 also sets a number of conditions upon the new fee:

- Fees may only be used to pay for programs and projects that bear a relationship or benefit to the owners of motor vehicles paying the fee and are consistent with a regional transportation plan.
- The countywide transportation planning agency must adopt a specified VRF expenditure plan, and must make a finding of fact that the programs and projects have a relationship or benefit to the persons who pay the fee.
- Local administrative costs are limited to no more than 5 percent of the fees collected.

SB 83 identifies specific goals for the use of the VRF, including reducing congestion and the impacts of pollution related to motor vehicles. The fees collected will be used to fund projects and programs that will meet those goals, either by improving the operation of existing transportation infrastructure or by providing alternatives to driving.

## What is the Purpose of This Plan?

The Marin County Vehicle Registration Fee Expenditure Plan (Plan) will guide annual expenditure of the funds generated by a \$10 per year vehicle registration fee (Fee), if approved by a majority of voters in the November 2010 election. The goal of this Plan is to support transportation investments in a way that sustains the County's transportation network and reduces traffic congestion and vehicle-related pollution. The Fee would be a key part of an overall strategy to develop a balanced, well-conceived program that improve transportation of all types – automobile, transit, bicycle, walking and specialized transportation services. The Fee will fund programs that:

- Repair and maintain local streets, roads, and multi-use pathways in the County, including neighborhood and residential priority locations.
- Make public transportation easier to use and more efficient, particularly for the senior and disabled population in Marin County.
- Make it easier to get to work or school, whether by driving, using public transportation, bicycling, or walking.
- Result in the reduction of pollution from cars and trucks, by reducing the need to drive and encouraging the use of alternative fuel vehicles.

The Plan would have the following specific conditions:

- All of the money raised by the Fee would be used exclusively for transportation projects and programs in Marin County.
- Funds cannot be taken by the State once approved for Marin County.
- There must be a relationship or benefit between the projects or programs in the Expenditure Plan to the owners of motor vehicles paying the Fee.
- Revenue raised will help to fund projects in Marin County that increase safety for motorists, pedestrians, and bicyclists.
- The Fee will provide revenue that will help improve mobility options and reduce congestion for those who live in Marin County.
- Fee revenue will establish a reliable source of funding to help finance critical and essential local transportation projects and programs.

## What are the Goals of the Marin County Vehicle Registration Fee?

In Marin County, the Vehicle Registration Fee is proposed by the Transportation Authority of Marin (TAM), the same entity that programs and manages the half-cent transportation sales tax, Measure A. TAM is responsible for programming transportation funding from a variety of local, regional, state and federal sources, and is in a unique position to magnify the impact of this new revenue source through leveraging of other transportation funding sources.

This Plan is designed to address some important goals established by the TAM Board of Commissioners for Marin County:

- Reduce greenhouse gases and vehicle miles traveled, while supporting healthy living
- Satisfy SB 83's requirement that the fee have a relationship to, or benefit, the rate payer
- Select projects that are part of an approved plan and have a strong history of community input
- Improve mobility options and reduce congestion
- Benefit local residents
- Enable TAM and other agencies to leverage transportation funds coming from state and federal sources
- Be cost effective
- Ensure that benefits are easily measureable and quantifiable

In keeping with the goals established by the TAM Board, and with the assistance of an Expenditure Plan Advisory Committee (EPAC), the jurisdictions of Marin County, and the general public, this Plan focuses on a small number of critical projects and programs, described later in this document:

- Maintain Local Streets and Pathways
- Improve Transit for Seniors and Persons with Disabilities

- Reduce Congestion and Pollution

## How Much Revenue Will This Plan Generate?

As of January 2009, there were approximately 230,000 registered vehicles in Marin County. A \$10 annual fee on each vehicle registered in the County would generate approximately \$2,300,000 annually. Actual available revenues would be reduced by the amount withheld by the State for collecting and distributing the funds, and up to 5 percent allowed for local administration costs. Just over \$2 million should be available for programming annually.

It should be noted that this is a fixed fee per vehicle, and does not index with inflation. Fee revenues will increase only if the number of registered vehicles in the County increases. The Plan makes the conservative assumption that the number of vehicles registered in Marin will remain flat over the next 10 years. The success of this Plan is dependent not only on the revenue generated by this Fee, but also by creative leveraging from other funding sources that multiplies the impact of each new dollar invested.

## Plan Development and Implementation

This Plan is the result of an extensive public involvement process that included two public opinion polls, as well as numerous meetings with local governmental agencies, stakeholder organizations and the voters of Marin County. The Plan was also guided by an Expenditure Plan Advisory Committee (EPAC) that included diverse opinions. The members of this committee are identified in the acknowledgements section at the front of this document. Input was also provided by the eleven Cities and Towns in Marin County, as well as the County, Marin Transit, and Golden Gate Transit.

If passed by a majority of the voters of Marin, this Fee will be managed by TAM, an agency created to plan, finance, and oversee implementation of transportation projects and programs for Marin County. A primary responsibility of TAM is the management of the half-cent sales tax for transportation in Marin County, known as Measure A. The TAM Board includes representatives from each of the Cities and Towns in Marin County, as well as all five members of the County Board of Supervisors, who all work together to improve transportation mobility and accessibility in the County. Public input will be guaranteed throughout the implementation process through TAM's existing Board and Committee structure. TAM's existing Citizens' Oversight Committee (COC), which was created for the purpose of providing oversight to Measure A revenues and expenditures, is made up of citizens representing a diverse range of interests within the County. The existing COC will assume the same role for the vehicle registration fee, report directly to the public, and will produce an annual report regarding the revenues and expenditures of the Fee.

This Plan is expected to remain in effect for a period of 10 years, with annual reporting on the use of these funds. After 10 years, a revised expenditure plan will be approved by the TAM Board after a public input process. Details of how the revenue collected will be administered can be found in the final section of this document.



## Plan Summary

The Plan includes three elements that work together to reduce congestion, improve safety, and reduce the environmental impacts from vehicle trips. The three elements are:

- Maintain Local Streets and Pathways
- Improve Transit for Seniors and Persons with Disabilities
- Reduce Congestion and Pollution

Figure 1 summarizes the proposed Expenditure Plan for the VRF in Marin County. Each program element is described in more detail in the sections that follow.

**Figure 1 Summary of Expenditure Plan**

Estimated Annual \$	Expenditure Element	Description of Element	How Will Funds be Spent?	Relationship to Fee Payer
35% (\$721,000)	1a. <b>Maintain</b> Local Streets	<p>Funds will be used to maintain and improve Marin County's local streets for motorists, pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit users, thereby improving roadway performance and safety. Eligible activities include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Road maintenance, rehabilitation and congestion relief on local and residential streets. New facilities are also eligible for maintenance funds.</li> <li>Safety improvements for all modes</li> <li>Emergency pothole repair on residential streets, sidewalks and pathways</li> <li>Crosswalk and accessibility enhancements</li> <li>Intersection control, pavement, and drainage improvements</li> <li>Streetscape improvements to better manage stormwater runoff</li> <li>Maintenance and improvement of Class I (exclusively) bicycle and pedestrian pathways, including new facilities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>35% of funds according to formula based on population (50%) and lane miles (50%)</li> <li>5% of funds exclusively dedicated to Class I bike/pedestrian path maintenance. Distribution based on share of Class I pathway miles constructed after 1/1/08.</li> <li>Priorities determined by local agencies and jurisdictions working in concert with local residents and councils</li> </ul>	<p>Fee payers benefit from having roadways safely maintained and operating efficiently. Improved crossings and intersection performance improves safety and efficiency for users. Improved pavement conditions reduce vehicle maintenance costs. Well-maintained pathways encourage walking and bicycling, thereby reducing congestion and pollution.</p>
5% (\$103,000)	1b. <b>Maintain</b> Class I Bike/Ped Pathways			
35 % (\$721,000)	2. <b>Improve</b> Transit for Seniors and People with Disabilities	<p>Eligible activities include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implementing a Mobility Management Program that identifies and implements mobility options for Seniors and Persons with Disabilities</li> <li>Support and enhance paratransit (e.g. Whistlestop Wheels) and other local services</li> <li>Create a "Paratransit Plus" program to serve older seniors who may not qualify for service under the Americans With Disabilities Act</li> <li>Implement other innovative programs to provide mobility to seniors as an alternative to driving</li> </ul>	<p>Marin Transit will receive and prioritize funds working with their Mobility Management Consortium of service providers and stakeholders.</p>	<p>Fee payers benefit from reduced trips by "at risk" drivers, reducing local vehicle trips and improving safety. Fee payers benefit from increased options to driving, reduced dependence on friends and family for mobility, and increased options as drivers prepare to "retire" from driving.</p>

Estimated Annual \$	Expenditure Element	Description of Element	How Will Funds be Spent?	Relationship to Fee Payer
25% (\$515,000)	3. Reduce Congestion and Pollution	<p>Eligible activities are limited to 3 core strategies and programs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>School Safety and Congestion Reduction: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain and expand the School Crossing Guard program</li> <li>Provide matching funds for Safe Routes to Schools programs</li> <li>Enhance/expand programs designed to reduce congestion and improve safety around schools including Street Smarts and School Pool programs</li> </ul> </li> <li>Local Marin County Commute Alternatives: Enhance/expand existing alternative programs in Marin County designed to reduce single occupancy commuting, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Carpool and vanpool information and incentive programs,</li> <li>Emergency Ride Home, and</li> <li>Transit information and promotion</li> <li>Driving management programs such as telecommuting</li> <li>Support efforts to bring a carsharing program to Marin County</li> </ul> </li> <li>Alternative Fuel Infrastructure and Promotion: Support the development of alternative fuel infrastructure (such as electric vehicle fueling stations) and education programs; support alternative fuel vehicle programs.</li> </ul>	<p>TAM will be responsible for distributing school safety funds to sustain or grow existing programs. Beneficiaries of these funds will include the County, local jurisdictions, and school districts.</p> <p>TAM will administer the Commute Alternatives program as part of its existing Commute Alternatives program.</p> <p>TAM will assign funds for alternative fuels programs, as a match to other fund sources, or through competitive grant programs. TAM will administer alternative fuel educational programs in cooperation with stakeholders, such as the Marin Climate and Energy Partnership.</p>	<p>Fee payers benefit from reduced school trips by car, a large traffic congestion and pollution generator in Marin. Improved crossings at schools reduce collisions and improve safety for motorists, pedestrians, and bicyclists.</p> <p>Fee payers benefit from commute programs which reduce trips, congestion, and pollution related to commute travel, the single largest source of congestion in the County. Programs reduce costs, provide flexibility, improve the environment, and improve worker health and productivity.</p> <p>Alternative Fuel programs will benefit fee payers by providing lower cost alternatives to the cost of driving, while reducing pollutants associated with gasoline powered vehicles. Reduced emissions will benefit the fee payer by improving air quality, especially on congested roadways and at intersections.</p>

## Element 1 – Maintain Local Streets and Pathways

Element 1		
a) Maintain and Improve Marin County's Local Streets for All Users Including Motorists, Pedestrians, Bicyclists, and Transit Riders		
b) Maintain Class I Bicycle/Pedestrian Pathways		
	%	Est. 10 year revenue
What can local streets and pathways maintenance funds be used for?		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Road maintenance, rehabilitation and congestion relief on local and residential streets. New facilities are also eligible for maintenance funds</li> <li>Safety improvements for all modes</li> <li>Emergency pothole repair on residential streets, sidewalks and pathways</li> <li>Crosswalk and accessibility enhancements</li> <li>Intersection control, pavement, and drainage improvements</li> <li>Streetscape improvements to better manage stormwater runoff</li> <li>Maintenance and improvement of Class I (exclusively) bicycle and pedestrian pathways, including new facilities</li> </ul>	40%	\$8.24 M
How will the funds be spent?		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>TAM will distribute 35% of available funds to the Cities, Towns and County of Marin based on a formula which combines population (50%) and lane miles (50%). Funding priorities will be determined by local public works directors working in concert with local residents and councils. Funds will be made available only to municipalities that have adopted a Complete Streets policy.</li> </ul>	35%	\$7.21 M
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Funding for Class I pathway maintenance will be distributed by TAM annually to the agencies and jurisdictions who own, operate, or maintain eligible Class I pathways in Marin County. The distribution of funds will be based on a publicly available, published inventory, adopted by TAM, of pathways constructed after January 1, 2008. This inventory will be updated every two (2) years to account for newly constructed Class I facilities throughout Marin County. In no case will funds allocated to an agency or jurisdiction exceed their actual expenses for Class I pathway maintenance.</li> <li>Class I maintenance funds will be made available only to municipalities that have adopted a Complete Streets policy.</li> </ul>	5%	\$1.03 M

### 1a. Maintain Local Streets

#### **Relationship to fee payer:**

Fee payers benefit directly from having roadways safely maintained and operating efficiently. It is difficult for drivers of all types of vehicles (automobiles, trucks, and buses) to safely navigate

poorly maintained roadways (i.e. low pavement quality, faded striping, potholes, etc). Programs that improve local road operations benefit the fee payer by identifying and mitigating recurring congestion problems. Improved pavement quality, crossings, and intersection performance improves safety and efficiency, as there are fewer opportunities for vehicle/pedestrian/bicycle conflicts and associated traffic congestion that may result when incidents occur. Finally, improved roadway performance reduces vehicle maintenance costs for owners, as well as air pollution, especially during periods of peak congestion.

Please see the “Marin County Summary of VRF Findings of Benefit” for additional information on how this expenditure element benefits the fee payer.

***Summary of expenditure element:***

Virtually every trip begins or ends on a local or residential street. Yet, our local and residential streets are some of the most neglected spaces in the County, with every jurisdiction in the County reporting a sizeable and growing backlog of maintenance needs on these roads. Maintenance problems on our local and residential streets have a significant impact on all modes, including bicyclists and pedestrians, who are more susceptible to accidents and injuries from cracks, potholes, and uneven pavement.

This expenditure plan element would allocate 35 percent of the funds available through the VRF to local public works departments, with the ability to allocate revenue for the purposes of improving conditions on local and residential streets. Public Works Directors would have the discretion to prioritize projects in their jurisdictions in collaboration with their councils and local constituents. Projects are expected to include improvements for all modes in the following general categories:

- Road maintenance, rehabilitation and congestion relief on local and residential streets. New facilities are also eligible for maintenance funds
- Safety improvements for all modes
- Emergency pothole and crack repair on local and residential streets, sidewalks and pathways
- Maintenance of new streets and roads adopted by the local jurisdiction
- Crosswalk and accessibility enhancements
- Intersection control, pavement and drainage improvements
- Streetscape improvements to better manage stormwater runoff

Funds will be distributed to the Department of Public Works in each of the jurisdictions in the County using the existing, well-accepted Measure A formula that is based 50 percent on local population and 50 percent on number of lane miles. Based on the 10-year projections for VRF revenue and the current funding formula, the following table in Figure 2 shows the amount of revenue each jurisdiction can expect over a ten year period. New facilities will also be eligible for these funds and the distribution formula will be reviewed and recalculated every two years to account for new facilities, simultaneous with existing TAM policy and procedures for Measure A distribution of Local Infrastructure funds. This update shall not be considered an amendment to the plan.

**Figure 2 10-Year Revenue for Local Residential Road Maintenance By Jurisdiction**

Marin County	10-Year Revenue
Belvedere	\$73,200
Corte Madera	\$249,000
Fairfax	\$198,900
Larkspur	\$282,200
Mill Valley	\$401,800
Novato	\$1,264,000
Ross	\$73,000
San Anselmo	\$320,000
San Rafael	\$1,410,000
Sausalito	\$198,300
Tiburon	\$245,000
County	\$2,498,000
<b>County Total</b>	<b>\$7,213,500</b>

Funds generated by the VRF cannot be expected to solve all local road needs on their own. However, combined with other local and state sources, the VRF provides a stable base of revenue that can be used for high priority repairs, as well as leveraging or matching other sources for planned projects, thereby increasing the federal and state revenues coming to Marin County. Although major roadway repair projects can be very expensive, having a ready fund source such as the VRF could enable Public Works Directors to fill cracks and make “quick response” improvements that will have an immediate impact on safety for all users.

#### 1b. Maintain and Improve Class I Bicycle/Pedestrian Pathways

##### ***Relationship to fee payer:***

Fee payers benefit directly from this expenditure category. Maintenance of Class I pathways is one of the most effective ways to encourage bicycle and pedestrian travel. Non-motorized facilities encourage mode shifts and an increase in the number of trips made by bicycle and on foot. As a result of these mode shifts, fewer vehicles are on local streets and roadway congestion is reduced for fee payers. Maintenance of Class I pathways also helps to reduce conflicts between bicyclists and pedestrians, particularly at intersections, thereby improving safety for all users.

Please see the “Marin County Summary of VRF Findings of Benefit” for additional information on how this expenditure element benefits the fee payer.

##### ***Summary of expenditure element:***

The Plan dedicates 5 percent of funding in this element to be distributed to local agencies and jurisdictions in Marin County exclusively for the maintenance of Class I bicycle and pedestrian pathways. These pathways are generally characterized as exclusive bicycle, pedestrian and

multi-use pathways separated from streets and roads. Marin County benefits from an integrated network of off-road pathways, including the new Puerto Suello Hill multi-use path and the CalPark Tunnel Bicycle and Pedestrian Pathway. Funding has been secured for the construction of these pathways, and it is imperative that these facilities be maintained in order to maximize their use and ensure the safety of bicyclists and pedestrians. Currently, there are no dedicated funding sources for maintaining bicycle/pedestrian pathways. These funds will provide basic resources to the local jurisdictions that are responsible for managing this vital resource.

Furthermore, dangerous and poorly maintained residential roads discourage potential bicyclists and pedestrians from using these alternatives. Therefore, improving conditions on local residential streets will benefit all modes and all types of travelers in Marin County. The projects included in this expenditure plan element are both necessary for improving multimodal travel and can be directly linked to the fee payers, since virtually all auto trips begin or end on a local or residential street.

Funding for Class I pathway maintenance will be distributed by TAM annually to the agencies and jurisdictions who own, operate, or maintain eligible Class I pathways in Marin County. The distribution of funds will be based on a publicly available, published inventory, adopted by TAM, of pathways constructed after January 1, 2008. This inventory will be updated every two (2) years to account for newly constructed Class I facilities throughout Marin County. In no case will funds allocated to an agency or jurisdiction exceed their actual expenses for Class I pathway maintenance. This update shall not constitute an amendment to the plan.

Finally, this funding will be made available only to municipalities that have adopted a local Complete Streets policy either by a directive of the Public Works Department, Council Resolution, within the Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan, or within the Transportation Element of the General Plan.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> AB 1358 (Leno), the “Complete Streets Act of 2008,” requires that all municipalities incorporate Complete Streets provisions in the Transportation Element of their General Plans beginning in 2011.

## Element 2 – Improve Transit for Seniors and Persons with Disabilities

Element 2		
Improve Transit for Seniors and Persons with Disabilities		
	%	Est. 10 year revenue
What can these transit funds be used for?		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implementing a Mobility Management Program that identifies and implements mobility options for Seniors and Persons with Disabilities</li> <li>Support and Enhance paratransit (e.g. Whistlestop Wheels) and other local services focused on this population</li> <li>Create a “Paratransit Plus” program to serve older seniors who may not qualify for service under the Americans With Disabilities Act</li> <li>Implement other innovative programs to provide mobility to seniors as an alternative to driving</li> </ul>	35%	\$7.21 M
How will the funds be spent?		
TAM will distribute these funds to Marin Transit. Marin Transit will report on the usage and effectiveness of these funds with an annual report presented to the TAM board in a publicly noticed meeting.		

### **Relationship to fee payer:**

Fee payers benefit directly from this expenditure category as it would reduce trips by "at risk" drivers, reduce local automobile trips, offer additional transportation options, and improve roadway safety. The expansion of transit service provides congestion relief as there are fewer drivers on the road. There is a particularly strong relationship between providing transit service in congested corridors and the fee payer, as this service provides an alternative transportation option for drivers who would choose a viable alternative, thereby reducing the impacts of vehicle related trips and reducing congestion resulting from additional vehicle trips.

The expansion of all types of specialized transit services including traditional paratransit services for older adults, regardless of disability status, will enable more of Marin’s senior population to access alternatives to driving and reduce the numbers of drivers on Marin’s streets. Additional programs that provide enhanced mobility options for seniors and persons with disabilities in Marin will benefit the fee payer by reducing vehicle trips and corresponding congestion and emissions, and limit the number of traffic injuries and deaths due to rapidly increasing numbers of older drivers.

Please see the “Marin County Summary of VRF Findings of Benefit” for additional information on how this expenditure element benefits the fee payer.

### **Summary of expenditure element:**

Reflecting national trends, the older adult population in Marin is increasing rapidly. The Association of Bay Area Governments estimates that as of today, almost 30 percent of Marin County residents are over the age of 60. This trend continues well into the foreseeable future, only slowing after 2030. Not only is the size of the senior population expected to grow rapidly, but the most rapid growth is expected to occur in the oldest age groups (85+), which have the most severe mobility challenges.



The expected rapid growth in the older population presents a major challenge for maintaining personal mobility for a number of reasons:

- The number of older people in Marin County is expected to double from 2005 to 2020. The number of older County residents who have difficulty driving or are unable to drive will also grow dramatically.
- Given Marin's geography, more and more seniors will continue to live in places that are difficult to serve by traditional public transportation and are located far from regular bus routes. This population may have difficulty transitioning to traditional public transportation.
- Existing alternatives to driving and conventional public transportation, especially services mandated under the Americans with Disabilities Act, will not be able to meet all the needs of seniors who must limit or cease driving.

If action is not taken, these trends may result in:

- Rising numbers of traffic accidents and injuries, as older drivers are statistically more likely to be involved in a collision than other adult drivers and are statistically more likely to be injured if an accident occurs.
- Strain on families of older people as they experience the practical and emotional issues of limited mobility.
- Strain on public, non-profit, and volunteer services as they attempt to assist older people and their families dealing with these issues.

It is central to the interest of potential vehicle registration fee payers, who include many older adults, to implement creative solutions that encourage a lifetime of mobility for Marin County residents, while enhancing safety and reducing VMT for individual trips and for trips by caregivers.

Funds in this category will be distributed to Marin Transit for use on Mobility Management programs and enhancements to the specialized transportation system for people with disabilities (sometimes called paratransit) to include older adults regardless of disability status. One of the most profound limitations to the current system, implemented under the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act, is that services are limited to persons who are unable to use a fixed route bus due to a physical or cognitive disability. Because many seniors are reluctant to describe themselves as "disabled," they either do not apply for services, or may not understand the benefits of the program to their situation. By removing that stigma and broadening the range of services being offered to seniors and persons with disabilities, this program will ensure that individuals can be matched to the services that will best meet their needs. This will reduce the need for at risk seniors to continue driving, and will also reduce the burden on caregivers and family members who are often tied to their own cars to provide transportation for a loved one.

Mobility management activities that would be eligible for funding under this program include providing the services of a Mobility Manager who will coordinate existing resources and tailor mobility solutions for individuals in need. Programs that will be implemented by the Mobility Manager include travel training, development of shuttle services, education and outreach on increased use of taxis, and expansion of specialized transit and paratransit services to older adults regardless of disability status.

## Element 3 – Reduce Congestion and Pollution

Element 3		
Reduce Congestion and Pollution		
	%	Est. 10 year revenue
What can congestion and pollution reduction funds be used for?		
<p>Eligible activities are limited to 3 core strategies and programs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School Safety and Congestion Reduction: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Maintain and expand the School Crossing Guard program</li> <li>○ Provide matching funds for Safe Routes to Schools programs</li> <li>○ Enhance/expand programs designed to reduce congestion and improve safety around schools including Street Smarts and School Pool programs</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Local Marin County Commute Alternatives: Enhance/expand existing alternative programs in Marin County designed to reduce single occupancy commuting, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Carpool and vanpool information and incentive programs,</li> <li>○ Emergency Ride Home, and</li> <li>○ Transit information and promotion</li> <li>○ Driving management programs such as telecommuting</li> <li>○ Support efforts to bring a carsharing program to Marin County</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Alternative Fuel Infrastructure and Promotion: Support the development of alternative fuel infrastructure (such as electric vehicle fueling stations) and education programs; support alternative fuel vehicle programs.</li> </ul>	25%	\$5.15 M
How will the funds be spent?		
<p>TAM will be responsible for distributing school safety funds to sustain or grow existing programs.</p> <p>TAM will administer the Commute Alternatives program as part of its existing commuter program. All transit programs will be coordinated through Marin Transit and/or Golden Gate Transit</p> <p>TAM will assign funds for alternative fuel programs, as a match to other fund sources or through competitive grant programs. TAM will manage alternative fuel program education in collaboration with stakeholders such as the Marin Climate and Energy Partnership.</p> <p>The distribution of funds among the three eligible expenditures for this element will be determined every two years based on grant opportunities and funding needs.</p>		

### **Relationship to fee payer:**

Fee payers directly benefit from school access and safety programs as more students can get to school by walking, bicycling, or taking transit. Access to school via these modes reduces the need for vehicle trips in the morning and afternoon, one of the major causes of localized traffic congestion and related air quality impacts in Marin County. Fee payers also benefit from improved safety near schools. Crossings near schools are a particularly dangerous environment,

especially for children who are often unfamiliar with the rules of the road and may not be physically advanced enough to cross the road by themselves. School safety programs, such as dedicated crossing guards, have proven to be very effective at limiting collisions near schools and prioritizing the safe travel of youth, which reduces incidents and related delays.

Considerable research has demonstrated that commute alternative programs that promote and incentivize the use of carpools/vanpools, transit, walking and biking can reduce single occupancy driving. A recent ridesharing study concluded that such programs can reduce daily vehicle commute trips to specific worksites by 5-15 percent.<sup>2</sup> Furthermore, marketing programs can often increase use of alternative modes by 10-25 percent and reduce automobile use by 5-15 percent.<sup>3</sup> The benefit to the fee payer is clear as fewer vehicles on the road would reduce traffic congestion and related air pollution.

Car sharing programs have proven to be very effective at reducing both vehicles on the road and vehicle ownership. More specifically, each car-sharing vehicle takes nearly 15 private cars off the road – a net reduction of almost 14 vehicles.<sup>4</sup> A study<sup>5</sup> of San Francisco's City CarShare found that members drive nearly 50 percent less after joining. The implementation of a car sharing program in Marin County would benefit the fee payer by reducing congestion due to vehicle trips, providing additional mobility choices, and reducing transportation costs for those that participate in the program.

Reducing air pollution through mitigation programs and projects is identified as an eligible expenditure in the statute established by Senate Bill 83. By providing alternative fuel vehicle and infrastructure support, Marin County can make using lower emission vehicles more feasible for many individuals. These programs will benefit fee payers by providing lower cost alternatives to the cost of driving, while reducing emissions associated with gasoline powered vehicles. Such outcomes will benefit the fee payer by improving air quality, especially on congested roadways and at intersections. Travel corridors with high levels of congestion, as well as intersections with continued delay create “hot spots” of air pollution, which are particularly harmful to drivers. Consequently, the increased use of alternative fuel vehicles can have positive health impacts for drivers.

Please see the “Marin County Summary of VRF Findings of Benefit” for additional information on how this expenditure element benefits the fee payer.

***Summary of expenditure element:***

Eligible expenditures for the element will be limited to three core congestion and pollution reduction strategies and programs. They are:

1. School Safety and Congestion Reduction
2. Local Marin County Commute Alternatives
3. Alternative Fuels Infrastructure and Promotion

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<sup>2</sup> Reid Ewing (1993), *TDM, Growth Management, and the Other Four Out of Five Trips*.

<sup>3</sup> Victoria Transport Policy Institute, <http://www.vtpi.org/tdm/tdm23.htm>

<sup>4</sup> Transportation Research Board (2005), *Car-Sharing: Where and How it Succeeds*, Transit Cooperative Research Program Report 108. [http://onlinepubs.trb.org/Onlinepubs/tcrp/tcrp\\_rpt\\_108.pdf](http://onlinepubs.trb.org/Onlinepubs/tcrp/tcrp_rpt_108.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> Cervero, Robert and Yu-Hsin Tsai (2003). “San Francisco City CarShare: Travel-Demand Trends and Second Year Impacts.” Institute of Urban and Regional Development, UC Berkeley.

The distribution of funds among the three eligible expenditures for this element will be determined every two years based on grant opportunities and funding needs. The goal is to be flexible and maximize the value of these funds by targeting matching grant opportunities, pilot programs and other timely revenue opportunities.

School related congestion has long been recognized in Marin County as one of the most significant contributors to localized congestion. Approximately 21-27 percent<sup>6</sup> of morning peak traffic is related to the school commute. In Marin, TAM and its member jurisdictions have successfully leveraged local sales tax dollars, along with other State and Federal funding sources, to reduce the impact of localized congestion through its nationally recognized Safe Routes to School programs, including: Green Ways to School, School Pool, Street Smarts, and Crossing Guard programs. While these programs have made significant progress in this critical area, there are not enough existing funds to maximize benefit. Further, declining revenue for school districts has resulted in increased pressure on TAM to increase its contributions to School Crossing Guards and other programs.

School Safety and Congestion Reduction funds are designed to support and enhance existing efforts. The new VRF revenue will make it possible to add crossing guards at a number of intersections that have already been identified as sites that would benefit from having a guard. Current funding estimates for this element will allow for an initial expansion of the crossing guards program to 12-15 sites beyond what is currently funded by the transportation sales tax Measure A. Depending on demand and funding availability, additional schools could be included later in the life cycle of this funding mechanism. In addition, VRF revenue could be used to maintain and expand the very popular Green Ways to School and School Pool programs, which encourages the use of alternative modes to travel to school. Funds in this element would be leveraged with Measure A sales tax funds, along with federal funds made available to TAM for Safe Routes programs.

This program is directly beneficial to fee payers in Marin County because school traffic is one of the biggest contributors to congestion in the County. School related traffic has a multiplier effect in its impact on congestion and vehicle miles traveled. The need to drop off or pick up a student is often a barrier to parents being able to take an alternate mode to work or for other types of trips. Discouraging single student driving trips to school will have the benefit of reducing localized congestion while providing opportunities for parents to try alternative modes for their other trips, thereby reducing both congestion and the impact of auto travel on the environment.

Along with congestion related to travel to school, the largest single source of both congestion and single occupant vehicle trips is the commute to work. Work trips constitute more than 20 percent<sup>7</sup> of the morning peak period traffic on Marin's streets and roads. Furthermore, over 60 percent of all trips that begin in Marin County have destinations within the County<sup>8</sup>.

The Commute Alternatives program is designed to reduce congestion and the impact of vehicle travel on the environment by enhancing and increasing the utilization and effectiveness of existing and proven commute programs in Marin County. These locally based programs are designed to offer alternatives for single occupant vehicle commutes to jobs in Marin County by providing commute alternatives, such as transit information and incentives. These programs also offer information and incentives to vanpool, carpool, and telecommute, including providing and

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<sup>6</sup> TAM website. <http://www.tam.ca.gov/index.aspx?page=94>

<sup>7</sup> "Moving Forward: A 25-Year Transportation Vision for Marin County."  
<http://www.tam.ca.gov/Modules/ShowDocument.aspx?documentid=94>

<sup>8</sup> Ibid

marketing emergency ride home programs, which provide an occasional, subsidized “emergency” ride to commuters who use alternative modes, but need a ride home in unforeseen circumstances. While these programs have been implemented successfully in other counties, the resources to promote and coordinate these services in Marin County have been very limited. This program will enable TAM to work specifically with Marin employers and employees to design locally customized commute alternatives that will make it easier for employees to try alternatives to single occupant commutes. Funds can also be dedicated to programs such as the implementation of a carshare program in Marin County.

Alternative Fuel programs and strategies is the final eligible expenditure for this element. Implementing methods to reduce greenhouse gases and other motor vehicle emissions is a growing requirement in California and funding sources are emerging to support this effort via the development and implementation of alternative fuel infrastructure. Often a limited amount of local matching funds can be leveraged to obtain sizable levels of funding for projects and programs for reducing pollutants that are affecting the climate and public health. For example, a fast growing program that is currently being developed is the conversion to electric vehicles. Revenue is needed to provide matching funds for grants related to clean air infrastructure, such as electric vehicle charging stations. The goal of the alternative fuels program is to coordinate, support and enhance Marin’s development of these strategies, while leveraging existing and future funding streams. This type of leveraging will ensure that funds are focused on proven programs with measureable results.

The benefits to fee payers from these efforts is clear – by reducing the number of drive alone commutes in Marin County, and supporting alternative fuel vehicles or carsharing, congestion will decrease and the environmental impacts of vehicle travel will be reduced.

## Required Findings

The statute requires that the ballot measure resolution, adopted by a countywide transportation agency, contain a finding of fact that the projects and programs to be funded by the fee increase have a relationship or benefit to the persons who will be paying the fee, and the projects and programs are consistent with the regional transportation plan. The statute also includes reduction of the impacts of motor vehicle related pollution as having a benefit to persons who will be paying the fee. Below is a summary of the benefits and relationship of this fee to the fee payer. Detailed documentation is included in a separate document, "Marin County Summary of VRF Findings of Benefit."

### Benefits and Relationship of Fee to the Fee Payer

The Plan includes three elements. Since this Fee is levied on motorized vehicles, by extension, the fee payer is predominately the driver of the vehicle. Each element benefits the fee payer as follows:

- **Maintain Local Streets and Pathways:** Fee payers benefit from having roadways safely maintained and operating efficiently. It is difficult for drivers of all vehicles (autos, trucks, school buses etc), pedestrians and bicyclists to safely navigate poorly maintained roadways (i.e. cracked and potholed pavement, faded striping and/or intersection deficiencies). Programs that improve local roads benefit the motorist by improving roadway conditions, identifying and mitigating recurring safety and congestion problems.
- **Improve Transit for Seniors and Persons with Disabilities:** Fee payers benefit from the provision of effective alternatives to driving for older adults and persons with disabilities who may be at risk drivers and/or require the services of friends and family members for their mobility. The provision of effective transportation services for seniors and persons with disabilities will also benefit fee payers who would like to drive less or stop driving as they get older by providing alternatives to driving.
- **Reduce Congestion and Pollution:** Fee payers benefit from reduction in automobile dependant, single passenger trips to schools through reduced corridor level and site-related congestion. Reductions in single student vehicle travel further reduce air pollution and vehicle related impacts on the environment. Secondary benefits may include removing barriers for parents to use alternatives to single occupant travel to work, by relieving them of the need to pick up or drop off students as part of their commute trip.

Fee payers benefit from the development and promotion of efficient and effective tools to help employers and employees take advantage of alternatives to single occupant vehicle travel to work. Reducing single occupant vehicle trips during commute times could have a profound effect on both congestion and the negative impacts of automobiles on the environment. Additional programs that support emerging "green" transportation technologies, such as alternative fuel vehicles, can reduce air pollution.

Fee payers benefit from support for alternative fuel programs, such as electric vehicle infrastructure. The need to transition to more fuel efficient vehicles, such as electric vehicles, can only occur with the implementation and maintenance of charging stations. Electric vehicles can reduce air pollution, as well as municipal fleet costs, business costs, and local fee-payer costs, while allowing the maximum flexibility to travel.

## Consistency with the Regional Transportation Plan

The Plan is consistent with the Metropolitan Transportation Commission's Regional Transportation Plan ("*Transportation 2035 Plan*") and performance objectives outlined in the Regional Transportation Plan. Details which support these findings are included in a separate document, "Marin County Summary of VRF Findings of Benefit."

## Identification in Countywide Transportation Plan

Programs in the Plan are identified in the investment policies outlined in the Countywide Plan adopted by the Marin County Board of Supervisors in 2007. Details describing investment policies of the Countywide Plan are included in a separate document, "Marin County Summary of VRF Findings of Benefit."

In addition, other regional plans have documented the need for these programs including:

- Marin County *Senior Mobility Action and Implementation Plan*
- *Transportation Authority of Marin Strategic Plan*

## Compliance with California Environmental Quality Act

Environmental review of the Expenditure Plan is not required under the rationale stated in *Sustainable Transportation Advocates of Santa Barbara v. Santa Barbara County Association of Governments* (2009) 179 Cal.App.4th 113. None of the programs in the Expenditure Plan rises to the level of specification that would create a project under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Many of the programs would be categorized as exempt. If a project to be funded by one of the Programs listed in this Expenditure Plan requires an analysis under CEQA, an independent project level CEQA analysis will be completed prior to implementation of the project. No fund allocations for implementing the improvement will be made until the requisite analysis has been completed.

## Governing Board and Organizational Structure

### Agency Responsible for Administering Proceeds of Fee

The Transportation Authority of Marin ("TAM"), pursuant to California Government Code section 65089.20, shall place a majority vote ballot measure before the voters to authorize a ten (\$10) dollar increase in motor vehicle registration fees for all vehicles registered in Marin County. If so approved, TAM will collect and administer the Vehicle Registration Fee in accordance with the Plan.

### Annual Budget and Reporting

The Annual Budget, adopted by TAM's elected Board of Commissioners each year, will project the expected fee revenue, other anticipated funds and planned expenditures for administration and programs. In addition, TAM will prepare an Annual Report which will be made available to the public and will summarize revenues collected and distributed each year. Before adopting the Annual Report, comments from the public will be invited at a publicly noticed regular meeting of the TAM Board.

## Use of Proceeds

The proceeds of the fees governed by this ordinance shall be used solely for the programs and purposes set forth in the Plan and for the administration thereof. Indirect costs of the programs as defined in federal Office of Management and Budget Circular A-87 shall not be allowed as eligible expenditures of these fee proceeds. The Transportation Authority of Marin will administer the proceeds of the Fee to implement the expenditure elements described in the Plan. Pursuant to California Government Code section 65089.20, not more than five percent of the fees shall be used for local administrative costs associated with the programs and projects.

It is the intent of the Expenditure Plan that revenues provided from the VRF be used to supplement existing revenues being used for transportation improvements and programs. Each project sponsor receiving VRF funds pursuant to the Expenditure Plan shall meet this requirement. TAM reserves the right to conduct compliance audits on the use of the funds to ensure the funds not be used to supplant existing transportation funding.

The costs of placing the measure authorizing imposition of the Fee on the ballot, including payments to the County Registrar of Voters and payments for the printing of the portions of the ballot pamphlet relating to the Fee, advanced by TAM, are eligible to be reimbursed from the proceeds of this fee, if the measure is approved by voters. The costs pursuant to this paragraph shall not be counted against the five percent administrative cost limit specified in California Government Code section 65089.20(d)

Pursuant to California Vehicle Code section 9250.4, the initial setup and programming costs identified by the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) to collect the Fee upon registration or renewal of registration of a motor vehicle shall be paid by TAM from the Fee. Any payments that TAM will advance to the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) prior to the collection of the Fee proceeds shall be repaid off the top of the initial proceeds collected, with no restriction on the funds. The costs deducted pursuant to this paragraph shall not be counted against the five percent administrative cost limit specified in California Government Code section 65089.20(d). Following implementation, annual costs incurred by the Department of Motor Vehicles, associated with the collection of the fee shall be taken off the top of the fees collected with the remainder transmitted to the Transportation Authority of Marin.

## Duration of Fee

The Fee, if so approved, would be imposed annually unless repealed. The spending priorities outlined in this Plan will be reviewed and the Plan will be amended and republished as necessary at least every 10 years. Amendments to the Plan will be approved by a two-thirds vote of the TAM board.

## Severability

If any provision of this Plan or the application thereof to any person or circumstance is held invalid, the remainder of this Plan and the application thereof to other persons or circumstances shall not be affected. If an expenditure element, or portion of an element, of this Plan is found to be invalid, the previously allocated funds to said element will be distributed to the remaining elements on a pro-rata share basis.

## Amendments to the Plan

Amendments to the Plan shall be approved by a two-thirds vote of the TAM Board. All jurisdictions within the County, along with the public, will be given a minimum of 45 days notice



and opportunity to comment on any proposed Plan amendment prior to its adoption. Any amendments will be heard at a noticed public hearing prior to TAM Board consideration.

## Option to Bond

The Agency administering the Fee will have the authority to bond for the purposes of expediting the delivery of projects and programs within the Expenditure Plan elements. The bonds, along with any issuance costs, will be paid with the proceeds of the Fee. The costs associated with bonding will be borne only by those elements in the Plan utilizing the bond proceeds. The costs and risks associated with bonding will be presented in the Agency's Annual Budget and will be subject to public comment before approving a bond sale.

## Citizens' Oversight Committee

The existing Citizens' Oversight Committee (COC), created by the TAM Board with the assistance of the League of Women Voters to provide oversight for the half-cent transportation sales tax (Measure A), will provide oversight of the vehicle registration fee as well. The COC reports directly to the public and will be responsible for reviewing all revenues and expenditures related to the Fee. The responsibilities of the Committee are:

- The Committee must hold public meetings to inform Marin County residents how funds collected from the Fee are being spent. The Meetings will be open to the public and must be held in compliance with the Brown Act, California's open meeting law. Information announcing the meetings must be well publicized and posted in advance.
- The Committee must publish information on the use of the Fee in an annual report. This report can be included as part of the annual report currently published by the COC related to the half-cent transportation sales tax. Copies of these documents must be made widely available to the public at large.

Members of the COC will be private citizens who are neither elected officials of any government nor public employees from any agency that either oversees or benefits from the proceeds of the Fee. Membership will be restricted to individuals who live in Marin County. Membership is restricted to individuals without personal economic interest in any of TAM's projects. A single Citizen's Oversight Committee will oversee both the Measure A half-cent sales tax and the Vehicle Registration Fee. Membership in the COC is outlined in Appendix A.

## Implementation

This Plan is guided by principles that ensure the revenue generated by the Vehicle Registration Fee is spent in the most efficient and effective manner possible, consistent with the desires of the voters of Marin County. The principles outlined in this section provide the flexibility needed to address issues that may arise during the life of the Plan. The specific operations of the Authority are further addressed in its Administrative Code.

1. The Transportation Authority of Marin (TAM) is charged with a fiduciary duty in administering the Vehicle Registration Fee proceeds in accordance with the applicable laws and this Expenditure Plan.
2. All meetings of TAM will be conducted in public according to State law, through publicly noticed meetings. The annual budget of the Authority, including the budget for the use of these funds, will be prepared for public scrutiny. TAM will select and allocate funds to specific projects or programs from each element in the Expenditure Plan.

3. Under no circumstances may the proceeds of this Vehicle Registration Fee be applied to any purpose other than for transportation improvements benefitting the payers of the fee in Marin County. The funds may not be used for any transportation projects or programs other than those specified in this Plan without an amendment of the Expenditure Plan.
4. This Plan shall take effect at the close of the polls on the day of election, at which time the proposition is adopted by a majority of the electors voting on the measure.
5. Actual revenues may be higher or lower than expected in this Plan due to changes in receipts and/or changes in the number of vehicles registered in Marin County. Because the Expenditure Plan is based on percentage distributions, dollar values in this Plan are estimates only. Actual revenues will be programmed over the life of the Plan based on the percentage distributions identified in the Plan. Formulas used to allocate local road maintenance and pathway maintenance funds will be revised every 2 years, consistent with the local infrastructure distribution of Measure A transportation sales tax funds as outlined in TAM's Strategic Plan, to reflect changes in population and/or road miles. Distribution of bicycle/pedestrian pathway maintenance funds will be revised every two years reflecting any new or updated Class I pathway miles.
6. Funds may be accumulated by TAM over a period of time to pay for larger and longer-term programs or projects. The TAM Board has the discretion to use the interest revenue generated by the fee proceeds to fund any transportation project or program that is described in the Expenditure Plan. Recipient agencies shall not retain more than one year of unspent funds. All interest accumulated by recipient agencies for funds retained beyond one year shall be retained by TAM for dedication to carrying out the programs and projects described in this Expenditure Plan.
7. If applicable, projects funded with the proceeds of the Vehicle Registration Fee will be required to complete appropriate California Environmental Quality Act, CEQA, clearance and other necessary environmental review, completed under the sole authority of the recipient of the funds.
8. Leveraging or matching of outside funding sources is highly encouraged.
9. New cities, towns or other entities that come into existence in Marin County after this Fee is authorized by voters could be considered as eligible recipients of funds through a Plan amendment.



## Appendix A: Citizens' Oversight Committee

The Citizens' Oversight Committee, established for the oversight of half-cent sales tax funds under Measure A, will also oversee the management of VRF funds. The Citizens' Oversight Committee is made up of private citizens who are neither elected officials of any government body nor public employees from any agency that either oversees or benefits from the proceeds of the VRF. Membership is restricted to 12 individuals who live in Marin County. All members must be approved by the TAM Board.

The membership of the Citizens' Oversight Committee is as follows:

- 5 members, one member from each of the planning areas in Marin County (Northern Marin, Central Marin, Ross Valley, Southern Marin, and West Marin).
- 7 members selected to reflect a balance of viewpoints. These members are nominated by their respective organizations and approved by the Board of the Authority, as follows:
  - One representative from a taxpayer group
  - One representative from the environmental organizations of Marin County
  - One representative from a major Marin employer
  - One representative from the Marin County Paratransit Coordinating Council, representing seniors and persons with disabilities
  - One representative from the League of Women Voters
  - One representative from an advocacy group representing bicyclists and pedestrians
  - One representative from a school district, including parents